

*-1-1/2/* A *Bank*  
**LOOKING-GLASS**

That Flatters not: *K*

REPRESENTING

The Unhappy and Tottering State

OF

Men in POWER,

Tho' rais'd to the highest Pinnacle

OF

Honour and Greatness:

BEING

CONTEMPLATIONS

AND

REFLECTIONS

UPON

The several Degrees and Changes of  
Human Life, from the Prince to the Peasant.

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*Me dulcis saturet Quies, &c.*

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Written by a Displac'd Courtier.

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London Printed, and Sold by *J. Baker*, at the  
*Black-Roy* in *Pater-Noster-Row*, 1711.

Price Bound One Shilling.

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CONTRADICTIONS  
 AND  
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# LOOKING-GLASS

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## Contemplation I.

*Of the various Changes and Uncertainties of Human Life.*

**T**IME and Chance is the Portion of every Man, but more considerably to be observ'd in the Statesman and the Courtier, than in the Tradesman or Peasant: For tho' the Latter are govern'd by Times and Seasons, they are not so critically to be observ'd as the Former; who, if he misses but the favourable Breath of his Prince's Pleasure, may, perhaps, lose the Expectations

tions of his whole Life, that depended on one lucky Moment, which being slip'd by, never returns again: For the Humour and Inclination of Princes are like the Winds that blow where they list, and seldom sit long in one Quarter; it would be a fruitless Enquiry to seek for a settled Reason from whence their Favour or Affection shou'd proceed.

'TIS enough for us to know, that the Breath of their Nostrils is able to disappoint the most ambitious and subtle Statesman, and, in the very Instant of their highest Presumption to their Prince's Favour, cast them Headlong to repent their Insolence, and fill their Places with the Meanest of the People for Merit or Honour, when they have a Mind to exert their Power, or let us see the Instability of Fortune, and not be deceiv'd, in thinking she is *Blind*, but rather take Care that Prosperity do not make *us* *so*.

IT must be confess'd, the Life of a Great Man is much more difficult than  
that

that of one in an Inferiour Station, there being more Variety of Temptations to lead him astray from the strictest Education and Resolutions of Virtue, in which, otherwise, he might have conducted himself happy enough; but then the Advantage of Glory, and doing publick Acts of Goodness, as well as private Benefits, will much recompence the Trouble of all: But if he carry himself arrogantly, and once despise the Men on whose Shoulders he has climb'd to that Height: If he possesses his Head with Notions that he is much securer than other Courtiers in the like Station, who had not the same Basis to stand upon, he will soon see himself laid level with those that he lately look'd so despiseably on.

FOR, wary Princes are wont to keep such Ministers in Awe, and let them know they can, in a Moment, cast them from all their Authority, and divest them of all that Power, that, with the pretended Services and Labours of many Years, they have been acquiring to aggraundize themselves, and promote

mote their own private Interest, raise their necessitous Families, Friends, and Abettors.

BUT, notwithstanding all the uncertain Greatness of these Men in Power, and the Fickleness of the Prince's Favour, we must look upon these Great Men of Fortune with abundance of Circumspection and Regard; for tho' they are not able to *deserve well* of us, yet they are powerful enough to *hurt*; us and tho' they may be unacceptable to the State, and suspected by the Prince, yet we must respect them to avoid the Blame of others, and their Enmity, for we must act according to the Men we have to deal with, and the Times we live in.

AMIDST the vast Variety and Uncertainty of Human Affairs, great Care must be had that we undertake nothing we cannot go thro' with; for besides that, the *Common People* judge of all Things by the *Event*, believing still that *Justice* and *Prudence* are on the Side that *Fortune* is; so that if we  
once

once have ill Success, we shall soon diminish the Esteem and Favour they had for us. But if we should be necessitated to Oppose these Great Men I have been speaking of, because they do something that is *Unjust*, or against the *Publick Good*, or *Religion*, or that is prejudicial to the *Army*, *Navy*, or *Treasury* of a Kingdom; upon these Occasions we ought to demean ourselves with *Prudence* and *Modesty*, not with *Clamour* and *Tumult*; so as to provoke them with *Contumelies* and *Reproach*, which becomes only such whose Judgments are corrupted by *Interest*, that all honest Men, and others concern'd, may perceive that what we do, proceeds not out of any private *Enmity*, but only from our Zeal to the publick Good.

AFTER we are promoted to the highest Degrees of Honour, we ought never to be Corrupted by any Occasion; or Deviate a whit from our former Modesty, Temperance and Civility; not puffed up with Prosperity, or the Variety of Business, so as to be surpriz'd

priz'd in any Undecency, lest we loose the Reputation we had gain'd before. For, truly, the Defects and Blemishes of *Statesmen* and *Courtiers*, proceed, for the most Part, out of *Pride*, the inseparable *Handmaid* of *Greatness*; this is that, that makes them despise other Men's Counsels, being vainly persuaded that they excell other Men as much in Wisdom, as they do in Power; and some are so carry'd away with this Stream, that they think it below them to keep within the Limits of *Law* or *Reason*, believing they cannot be *Great Men*, to whom all Things are not Lawful that they have a Mind to do.

**SOME** Great Men hate their Inferiours, for Injuries they have receiv'd from them, and many times, as it is common amongst *Statesmen*, for Injuries done to them; and it is a Custom among those Men who are puff'd up with Prosperity, to hate those they have most Wrong'd: Therefore the Injuries that these kind of Men do us, are best remedied in our seeming to be insensible, or not to understand them;  
for



for if we seem to be impatient in our Sufferings, they fearing our *Revenge* will seek to prevent it, by doing us a greater *Mischief*.

A S it is evident, from all Experience, how little Certainty there is in all the Affairs of Human Life, especially that of a Court; it highly concerns such to be always prepar'd for a Fall, for tho' it is thought more Generous to Fight than to Fly, yet if we Fight with greater Hazard of *Danger*, than Hopes of *Success*, it is more prudent to sound a *Retreat*, tho' we Fight flying.

A S it is also more glorious to descend gently by Steps, and, as it were, to go out at the Door, than to be cast Headlong out at the Window, so it is less shameful, under Colour of some specious Pretence, to bid Adieu to *Honour* and *Offices*, than to be strip'd disgracefully of them, and hereto may be apply'd this Saying,

*Why dost thou tire out jaded Fortune so?  
Depart the Court before thou'rt forc'd to go.*

SENECA



SENECA says, It's a Happiness to die in the midst of our Felicity; but on the other hand, I think that Great Man Happy, who, in the midst of his Prosperity, makes a Retreat: Perhaps he that doth so, shall not be applauded by all; for some that look on the Outside of Things only, will judge him unworthy the Fortune that he hath abandon'd: Yet he that is wise will provide for his own Safety, and remember that, in all Games, it is better to give over a Winner than a Loser.

THO' our Rise to all the Heights of Fortune is, as it were, by Steps or Degrees, but our Descent, if not timely foreseen, is, for the most Part, Headlong and Sudden: So that those who are flourishing in Favour and Authority, if they chance once to Slip or Stumble, their Falls are commonly Desperate and Fatal.

Contem-

## Contemplation II.

### *Infancy and Youth.*

**C**ONSIDER all the Periods of this Life : We enter it in *Tears*, we pass it in *Sweat*, we end it in *Sorrow*. Great and Little, Rich and Poor, not one in the whole World that can plead Immunity from this Condition. *Man* in this Point is worse than all other Creatures : He is born unable to support himself ; neither receiving in his first Years any Pleasure, nor giving to others any thing but Trouble ; and before the Age of *Discretion* passing infinite Dangers. Only herein he is less unhappy than in other Ages, because in this he hath no Sense nor Apprehension of his *Misery*. Now can we think there is any so void of Reason, that if it were granted him to live always a *Child*, would make Choice of such a *Life*?

**S**O then it is evident, That not simply

ply to *Live* is desirable; but to *Live well* and *happily*. But to proceed.

GROWS he? His *Troubles* likewise grow up with him. Scarcely is he come out of his Nurses Hands, and scarce knows what it is to Play, but he falls under the Subjection of a *School-Master*: I speak but of those which have the best Education, and are brought up with the greatest Care and Strictness. And then if he Studies, it is ever with Repining: And if he Plays, it is never but with Fear.

THIS whole Age, while he is under the Charge of another, is unto him no better than a Prison: And therefore he longs for, and only aspires to that Age, in which, freed from the Tutelage of another, he may become Master of himself; pushing *Time* forward, as it were, with his Shoulder, that he may the sooner enjoy his hop'd-for Liberty. In short, he desires nothing more than to see the End of the Age, which he looks upon as *Bondage* and *Slavery*, and enter upon the Beginning of his *Youth*.  
Contem-

## Contemplation III.

### *Manhood.*

AND what is the *beginning* of *Youth*, but the *death* of *Infancy*? And the *beginning* of *Manhood*, but the *death* of *Youth*? Or what is the *beginning* of to *Morrow*, but the *death* of the present *Day*?

AND thus he implicitly desires his *Death*, and judges his *Life* Miserable: and therefore cannot be reputed in a state of *Happiness* or *Contentment*.

BEHOLD him now, according to his wish, at *Liberty*; in that *Age* wherein he has his *Choice*, to take the way of *Virtue* or of *Vice*, and either to choose *Reason* or *Passion* for his *Guide*: His *Passion* entertains him with

with a thousand Delights, prepares for him a thousand Baits, and presents him with a thousand Worldly Pleasures to surprize him; And these are so agreeable to headstrong and unbridled Youth, that there are very few that are not taken and beguiled by them.

BUT when the reckoning comes to be made up, what Pleasures are they? They are but vicious and polluted Pleasures, which ever holds him in a Restless Fever: Pleasures that at the best end in Repentance, and like sweet Meats, are of a hard digestion: Pleasures that are bought with Pain, and in a moment Perish, but leave behind a lasting Guilt, and long remorse of Conscience: All which every Man's too dear Experience can witness.

AND yet this is the very Nature (if they be well examin'd) of the Pleasures of this World: There is in none so much Sweetness,

ness, but there is more Bitterness; none so pleasant to the Mouth, but it leaves an unsavoury Gust after it. I will not speak here of the Mischiefs, Quarrels, Debates, Wounds, Murthers, Banishments, Sicknes and other Dangers, whereinto sometimes the Incontinency, and sometimes the Insolency of this ill-guilded Age does plunge Men.

BUT if those that seem Pleasures be nothing else but Displeasures, if the *Sweetness* thereof be as an Infusion of *Wormwood*; what then must the Displeasure be which they feel? And how great the *Bitterness* that they taste?

BEHOLD then in short the Life of a *Young Man*, who, rid of the Government of his Parents and Masters, abandons himself to all the Exorbitancies of his unruly *Passion*, which like an unclean Spirit possessing him, throws  
him



him sometimes into the Water, and then into the Fire; sometimes carries him clear over a Rock, and at other times flings him headlong to the bottom.

BUT if he follows *Reason* for his Guide (which is much the better choice) yet on this hand there are wonderful Difficulties: For he must resolve to Fight in every part of the Field, and at every step to be in Conflict, as having his Enemy in Front, in Flank, and on the Rear, never leaving to assail him; and this Enemy is all that can delight him, all that he sees near, or far off: In short, the greatest Enemy in the *World*, is the *World it self*, which he must therefore overcome: But beside the *World* he has a thousand Treacherous Enemies within him, among whom his *Passion* is none of the least, which waits for an occasion to surprize him, and betray him to his Lusts. It is *God* only that can make him choose



choose the Path of *Vertue*, and it is *God* only that can keep him in it to the End, and make him Victorious in all his Combats. But alas, how few they are that enter into it! And of those few, how many that retire again? So that let a Man follow the one way or the other, he must either subject himself to a *Tyrannical Passion*, or undertake a weary and continual Combat; willfully throw himself into the Arms of *Destruction*, or fetter himself as it were in the *Stocks*; easily carried away with the current of the Water, or painfully stemming the impetuous Tide.

SEE here the happiness of the *Young Man*! Who in his Youth having drunk his full Draught of the Worlds vain and deceivable Pleasures, is over-taken by them with such a dull heaviness and astonishment, as *Drunkards* on the morrow after a *Debauch*; or *Gluttons* after a plentiful *Feast*; who are  
 so

so over-press'd with the Excesses of the former day, that the very remembrance of it creates their loathing. And even he that has made the stoutest resistance, feels himself so weary, and with this continual Conflict so bruised and broken, that he is either upon the point to yield, or dye. And this is all the Good, all the Contentment of this flourishing Age, by Children so earnestly desired, and by those who have experienc'd it, so heartily lamented.

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Contem-

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Conemplation IV.*Perfect Age.*

NEXT cometh that which is called *Perfect Age*, in which Men have no other thoughts, but to purchase themselves *Wisdom* and *Rest*. It is called *Perfect* indeed, but is herein only *Perfect*, that all Imperfections of Humane Nature, hidden before under the simplicity of *Childhood*, or the lightness of *Youth*, appear at this Age in their Perfection. I speak of none in this place, but those that are esteemed the wisest and most happy, in the Opinion of the World.

I have already shewed that we play'd in fear; and that our short *Pleasures* were attended on with long *Repentance*: But now *Avarice* and *Ambition* present themselves

selves to us, promising if we will adore them, to give us perfect Contentment with the *Goods* and *Honours* of this World; and surely none but those who are restrained by a Divine Hand, can escape the Illusions of the one or the other, and not cast themselves headlong from the top of the Pinnacle.

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Contem-

## Contemplation V.

### *Covetousness.*

**B**UT let us see what this Contentment is: The *Covetous Man* makes a thousand Voyages by Sea, and Journeys by Land; runs a thousand hazzards, escapes a thousand shipwracks, and is in perpetual fear and travel; and yet oftentimes either loseth his time, or gains nothing but *Sicknesses, Gouts and Oppilations*. In the purchase of this goodly Repose, he bestoweth his true Rest; and to gain *Wealth*, loseth his *Life*. But suppose he hath gain'd much, and that he hath spoil'd the whole *East* of its Pearls, and drawn dry all the Mines of the *West*; will he then be at quiet, and say *he is content*? Nothing less: For by all his Acquisitions, he gains but more Disquiet both  
of

of Mind and Body; from one Travel falling into another, never ending, but only *changing* his Miseries: He *desir'd* to have them, and now *fears* to lose them; he got 'em with burning Ardour, and possesses 'em in trembling Cold; he adventur'd among *Thieves* to get them, and now fears by *Thieves* and *Robbers* to be *depriv'd* of 'em again; he labour'd to dig them out of the Earth; and now to secure them, he *hides* them therein. In short, coming from all his Voyages, he comes into a Prison; and the end of his *Bodily* Travels, is but the beginning of the endless labour of his *Mind*. Judge now what this Man has gain'd, after so many Miseries. This Devil of *Covetousness* persuades him he has some rare and excellent thing; and so it fares with him as with those poor Creatures, whom the *Devil* seduceth under colour of relieving their *Poverty*; who find their hands full of *Leaves*, when they thought to find



find them full of *Crowns*: He pos-  
 sesseth, or rather is possessed by, a  
 thing wherein is neither Power  
 nor Vertue, more base and unpro-  
 fitable than the least Herb of the  
 Earth. Yet hath he heaped toge-  
 ther this vile Excrement, and so  
 brutish is grown, as therewith to  
*Crown his head*, when he ought to  
*Tread it under his Feet*.

BUT however it be, is he  
 therewith *satisfied* and *contented*?  
 So far from that, that he is now  
 more *dissatisfied* than ever. We  
 commend most those Drinks that  
 breed an alteration, and soonest  
 extinguish Thirst; and those  
 Meats that in least quantity do  
 longest resist Hunger: But now  
 of this, the more a Man drinks,  
 the more he is a thirst; the more  
 he Eats, the more he is an hun-  
 gry: It is a *Dropfie* that swells  
 him till he bursts, before he can  
 be satisfied. And which is worse,  
 in some so extravagant is this  
 thirst, that it makes them dig  
 the



the Pits, and carefully draw the Water, and after all, won't suffer 'em to drink: In the midst of a River, they are dry with thirst; and on a heap of Corn, cry out Famine: They have Goods, and dare not use them; Garments, but dare not put 'em on: And tho' they are possess'd of that in which they *joy*, they don't *enjoy* it: The sum of all which is, That of *all* which they have, they have *nothing*.

LET us then return unto that, That the attaining of all these deceiveable Goods, is nothing else but weariness of *Body*, and the possession for the most part weariness of *Mind*; which certainly is much the greater Evil, as the *Mind* is more sensible than the *Body*.

BUT the Compliment of all their *Misery* is, when they come to lose them, either by Shipwrack, Fire, or any other Accident, then they

they Cry, Weep, and Torment themselves, like little Children, that have lost their Play-Game, which yet is nothing worth. One cannot perswade them that mortal Men have any other Good in this World, but that which is mortal. They are in their own conceits not only spoiled, but utterly undone: And forasmuch as in these vain things they have fix'd all their hope, having lost them, they fall into *Despair*, out of which they are seldom recovered, many times laying violent hands upon themselves, and bringing their own lives to an unhappy period.

IN short, The recompence that *Covetousness* yields those that have serv'd it all their Life, is like that of the *Devil*, who after a small time, having gratified his Votaries, either leaves them to the *Hangman*, or himself breaks their Necks.

I will not here discourse of the  
Wickedness

Wickedness to which *Covetous Men* subject themselves to attain to these Goods, whereby their Conscience is fill'd with a perpetual Remorse, which never leaves them in quiet. It is enough that in this immoderate pursuit of Riches, which busieth and abuseth the greatest part of the World, the Body is macerated, the Mind debilitated, and the Soul is lost, without any Pleasure or Contentment.

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## Contemplation VI.

### *Ambition.*

LET us then come to *Ambition*, which by an over-eager aspiring to *Honour*, takes up the time and thoughts of the greatest Persons: And what, do we there think to find more *Content*? Alas! 'tis rather less, for as the one deceives us, by giving us for all our *Travel* but a vile *Excrement* of the Earth; so the other repays us but with *Smoke* and *Wind*: The *Rewards* of this, being as vain; as those of that, were gross. In both we fall into a bottomless *Pit*; but into this, the fall is by so much the more dangerous, as at the first shew the *Water* is more *clear* and *pleasant*.

OF those Men that make their court to *Ambition*, some are great about

*S. B 40.*

*Ea.*

about Princes, others Commanders of Armies; both sorts according to their degree, you see Saluted, Reverenced, and Adored of those that are under them: You see them Appareled in *Purple*, in *Scarlet*, and in *Cloth of Gold*; that at first sight one would think there is no Content to be found but amongst them. But alas! Men know not how heavy an Ounce of that *vain Honour* weighs; they know not what those Reverences cost them, nor how dearly they pay for an Ell of those rich Stuffs: They are so over-rated, that he who knew them well, would never buy them at the Price. The one hath attain'd to this degree, after a long and painful Service, hazarding his Life upon every occasion, with loss, oft-times, of a Leg or an Arm; and that at the Pleasure of a Prince that more regards a *hundred Perches of Ground* on his Neighbours Frontiers, than the *Lives of a hundred thousand* such as he; unfortunate

fortunate to serve who loves him not; and foolish to think himself in honour with him, that makes so little reckoning to lose him for a thing of no worth.

OTHERS there are that aspire to Greatness by flattering a Prince; which is a Life so base and servile, that they can never say their very Souls are their own, any longer than their Prince is pleas'd to let 'em; for they must always have their Hands and Tongues ready to do and say whatever he would have them; and yet they must be content to suffer a thousand *Injuries*, and receive a thousand *Disgraces*: And as near as they seem about the Prince, they are, nevertheless, always like the *Lyons-Keeper*, who, when by long *Patience*, a thousand *Feedings*, and a thousand *Clawings*, he hath made a fierce *Lyon* familiar, yet never gives him Meat, but with pulling back his Hand, always in fear lest he should catch him;



and if once in a year he Bites him, he sets it so close, that he is paid for a long time after. Such has frequently been the end of the *Favourites of Princes*.

WHEN a *Prince*, after long Service, hath rais'd a Man to the highest pitch of *Honour*, he sometimes makes it his Pastime to cast him down in an instant; and when he hath fill'd him with heaps of *Wealth* and *Riches*, he squeezes him afterward like a *Sponge*; loving none but himself, and thinking every one Born but to serve and please him.

THESE blind *Courtiers* make themselves believe that they have *Friends*, and many that Honour them; never considering that as they make only a shew to love and honour every Body, so others do to them: Their *Superiors* disdain them, and never but with some kind of scorn so much as salute them. Their *Inferiours* salute them, because they have need of



of *them*, (I mean of their *Fortune*, their *Food*, their *Apparel*, not their *Persons*.) And for their *Equals*, between whom *Friendship* usually consists, they envy, accuse, and cross each other; being always troubled either at their own *harm*, or at another's *good*. Now what greater torment is there to a Man than *Envy*? Which is indeed nothing but a *Hedtick Fever* of the Mind; by which they are utterly depriv'd of all *Friendship*, which was ever judg'd by the Wisest, the Sovereign Good amongst Men.

BUT to make this more evident, Let but *Fortune* turn her Back, and every *Man* turns from them; let 'em be but disrob'd of their *Triumphal Garment*, and no body will know 'em any more. And then suppose the most infamous and vilest *Miscreant* to be cloathed in it he shall, by Virtue of his *Robe*, inherit all the *Honours* of the other, and the same *Respect* shall be paid him; so that

it is the *Fortune* which they carry that is honoured, and not *themselves*.

BUT you will say, At least so long as that *Fortune* endur'd, they were at *Ease*, and had *Content*; and he who has three or four Years of happy Time, has not been all his Life unhappy. True, if it be to be at *Ease*, continually to fear to be cast down from that degree unto which they are raised; and daily covet with great Labour to climb higher. But those whom thou look'st upon to be so much at ease, because thou seest 'em but *without*, are *within* far otherwise; they are fair-built Prisons, but full within of deep Dungeons, Darkness, Serpents and Torments; Thou supposest their Fortunes very *large*, but they think them very *strait*; thou thinkest them very *high*, but they think themselves very *low*. Now he is as full as Sick, who believes himself to be so, as he  
who

who indeed is so: Suppose them to be *Kings*, yet if they think themselves *Slaves*, they are no better; for we are only what *Opinion* makes us. You see them well followed and attended, and yet even those whom they have chose for their Guard, they distrust. Alone or in in Company, they are ever in fear: Alone, they look behind them; in Company, they have an Eye on every side: they drink in Gold and Silver; but 'tis in those, and not in Earth or Glass, that Poyson is prepared: They have Beds soft and well made; yet when they lie down to Sleep, their fears and cares do often keep them waking, and turning from side to side, so that their very Rest is Restless. And there's no other difference between *them* and a poor *Fetter'd Prisoner*, but only that the *Prisoners Fetters* are of *Iron*, and the others are of *Gold*; the one is *Fetter'd* by the *Body*, the other by the *Mind*; the *Prisoner* draws his

Fetters after him, the Courtier  
 weareth his upon him: The Pri-  
 soners Mind sometimes comforts  
 the pain of his Body, and he  
 sings in the midst of his Miseries;  
 the Courtier is always troubled in  
 Mind; wearying his Body, and can  
 never give it rest. And as for  
 the Contentment you imagine they  
 have, you are therein more de-  
 ceived: You esteem them Great,  
 because they are raised High; but  
 are therein as much mistaken, as  
 they who should judge a Dwarf  
 to be Tall, for being set on a  
 Tower, or standing on the top of  
 the Monument. You measure (like  
 one unskill'd in Geometry,) the  
 Image with his Base, which you  
 should measure by it self, if you  
 would know its true height.  
 You imagine them to be Great,  
 but could you look into their  
 Minds, you would see they are  
 neither Great, (true Greatness con-  
 sisting in the contempt of those  
 vain Greatnesses unto which they  
 are Slaves) nor seem unto them-  
 selves

selves to be so; seeing they daily are aspiring higher, and yet never where they would be.

SOME there are, that pretend to set bounds to their *Ambition*; and to say, *If I could attain to such a degree, I should be contented, and sit down satisfied*; but alas! when they have once attained it, they scarce allow themselves a breathing time, before they make advances towards something higher; and all he has attain'd he esteems as nothing, and still reputes himself *low*, because there is some one *higher*; instead of reputing himself *high*, because there are a million *lower*: And so high he climbs at last, that either his Breath fails him by the way, or he slides from the top to the bottom:

BUT if he should get up, by all his toil and labour, unto the utmost height of his desires, he would but find himself as on the

top of the *Alps*, not above the Clouds, but more obnoxious to the Winds and Storms; and so a fairer Mark for those Lightnings and Tempests which commonly take pleasure to *Thunderbolt* and *dash* to powder that Proud height of theirs.

IT may be, herein you will agree with me, compell'd thereto by those many Examples that we find in the Histories of former Ages, and those more *Modern* ones that are still in most Memories.

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Contem-



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## Contemplation VII.

### *Imaginary Felicity.*

**B**UT (say you) such at least whom *Nature* hath sent into the *World* with *Crowns* on their *Heads*, and *Scepters* in their *Hands*, such as from their *Birth* are plac'd in that high *Sphere*, that they have nothing more to wish for; such are exempt from all the foremention'd *Evils*, and therefore may call themselves *Happy*: It may be indeed they may be *less Sensible* of them, having been *Born*, *Bred*, and *Brought Up*, amongst them: As one *Born* near the downfalls of *Nilus*, becomes *Deaf* to the sound of those *Waters*; and he that is *Born* and *Brought Up* in *Prison*, laments not the loss of *Liberty*; nor does he wish for *Day*, that is *Brought Up* amongst the *Cimmerians* in perpetual

tual Night. Yet even *Persons* of this high *Quality*, are far from being free; for the *Lightning* often blasts a *Flower* of their *Crowns*, or breaks the *Scepter* in their *Hands*; sometimes their *Crowns* are made of *Thorns*, and the *Scepter* that they bear is but a *Reed*: And such *Crowns* and *Scepters* are so far from curing the *Chagrin* of the *Mind*, and from keeping off those *Cares* and *Griefs* that hover still about 'em, that on the contrary, it is the *Crown* that brings them, and the *Scepter* that attracts them. O *Crown*! said the *Persian Monarch*, He that knew how heavy thou sittest on the *Head*, would not vouchsafe to take thee Up, tho' he should meet thee in his way. This Prince gave Law to the whole *World*, and each Mans *Fortune*, was what he pleased to make it; and therefore to appearance could give to every Man *Content*; and yet you see himself confessing, That in the whole *World*, which he held in his *Hand*, there

there was nothing but Grief and Unhappiness.

AND what better account can the rest give us, if they will speak impartially what they found? We will not ask them who have concluded a *Miserable Life* with a *Dishonourable Death*; who have beheld their Kingdoms Buried before them, and have in great *Misery* long over-liv'd their *Greatness*. Neither will we enquire of *Dionysus*, the Tyrant of *Sicily*, who was more content with a handful of Twigs to whip the little Children of *Corinth* in a School, than with the *Scepter*, wherewith he had Beaten all *Sicily*: Nor will we ask of *Sylla*, who having Robb'd the Commonwealth of *Rome*, which had *her self* before Robb'd the whole World, never found means of rest in *himself*, but by Robbing *himself* of his own Estate, with incredible hazzard of his *Power* and *Authority*. It is of  
none

none of these unhappy Princes that we will make Enquiry after Happiness: But let us ask the Opinion of the most Opulent and *Flourishing* of Princes, even of the Great King Solomon, a Man Endew'd with singular *Wisdom* from *Above*, beyond the rest of Men; and whose immense Riches was so great, that *Gold* and *Silver* were as plentiful as the *Stones* in the *Street*; and the Sacred History tells us, *There was such Plenty of Gold, that Silver was nothing accounted of, in the days of Solomon; and as he wanted not Treasure, so neither did he want for largeness of Heart to make use of.* And after he had try'd all the Felicities that the World could afford him, this is the account that he gives of it, *All is vanity and vexation of Spirit.*

IF we ask of the Emperour *Augustus* (who peaceably possess'd the whole World) He will bewail his Life past, and among infinite  
*Toils,*

*Toils, wish for the Rest of the meanest of his Subjects; esteeming that a happy Day that would ease him of his insupportable Greatness, and suffer him to live quietly among the least.*

IF of *Tiberus* his Successor, he will tell us, *That he holds the Empire, as a Wolf by the Ears, and that (if he could do it without danger of being bitten, he would gladly let it go;) complaining on Fortune for lifting him so high, and then taking away the Ladder, that he could not get down.*

IF of *Dioclesian*, a Prince of great *Wisdom* and *Vertue* in the *Opinion of the World*; he will prefer his voluntary Banishment at *Solona*, before all the *Roman Empire*.

AND lastly, If of the Emperour *Charles the Fifth*, esteemed the most happy that hath liv'd these

these many Ages, He will Curse his Conquests, Victories and Triumphs; and not be ashamed to own, That he hath felt more *Good* in *one day* of his *Monkish Solitude*, than in all his *Triumphant Life*.

NOW can we imagine those *Happy* in this *imaginary Greatness*, who think themselves *Unhappy* in *It*? And do profess that *Happiness* consists in being *lesser* and not *greater*. In a word, Whatever *Happiness* *Ambition* promiseth, it is nothing else, but suffering of *much Evil*, to get *more*. Men think by daily Climbing higher, to pluck themselves out of *this Evil*; and yet the height whereunto they so painfully Aspire, is the height of *Misery* it self.

I speak not here of the wretchedness of them, who all their Lives have been holding out their Caps to *Fortune* for the *Alms* of *Court-Favour*, and can get nothing;



thing; nor of them who jostling one another for it, cast it into the hands of a *Third*; nor of those who having it, and seeking to hold it faster, drop it through their *Fingers*, which often happens. Such, by all Men, are esteem'd unhappy; and are so indeed, because they judge themselves so.

WELL, you will now say, The *Covetous* in all his *Goods*, hath no *Good*; the *Ambitious* at the *Best* he can be, is but *Ill*: But may there not be *some*, who supplying the place of *Justice*, or being near about a *Prince*, may without following such unbridled *Passions*, enjoy their *Goods* with *Innocence* and *Pleasure*, joyning *Honour* with *Rest*, and *Contentment* of *Mind*?

Contem-

## Contemplation VIII.

### *The Instability of Mans State.*

**P**ERHAPS among Men of Sincerity it may in some sort be so; but if they are of another Composition it is in a manner impossible: For if you deal in Affairs of State, you shall either do *well* or *ill*; if *ill*, you, have *God* for your *Enemy*, and your own *Conscience* for a perpetually Tormenting *Executioner*: If *well*, you have *Men* for your *Enemies*, and of *Men* the *Greatest*; whose *Envy* and *Malice* will spy you out, and whose *Cruelty* and *Tyranny* will ever-more threaten you. Please the *People*, you please a *Beast*; and pleasing *such* ought to be *displeasing* to your *self*. Please your *self*, you *Displease* *God*: Please *Him*, you incur a thousand *Dangers* in the *World*,  
with

with the purchase of a thousand  
*Displeasures.*

THE sum of all therefore is  
*this*. There are none contented  
with their present Stations, for  
if you could hear the Talk of  
the *Wiseſt* and *leaſt Diſcontented*  
of Men, (whether they ſpeak ad-  
viſedly, or their words paſs them  
by force of Truth.) One would  
gladly change Garments with his  
*Tenant*: Another preacheth how  
goodly an *Eſtate* it is to have  
*nothing*: A *Third*, complaining  
that his *Brains* are broken with  
the noiſe of *Court* or *Palace*; hath  
no other thought, but as ſoon as  
he can to retire himſelf thence.  
So that you ſhall not ſee any  
but is diſpleaſed with his *own*  
*Calling*, and envieth that of *ano-*  
*ther*: And yet ready to recoil,  
if a Man ſhould take him at his  
word. None but is weary of the  
Inconveniencies whereunto his *Age*  
is ſubject, and yet wiſhes not to be  
*Elder*, to free himſelf of them,  
tho'

tho' otherwise he keeps of Old Age as much as in him lieth.

What must we then do in so great a contrariety and confusion of *Minds*? Must we, to find true Content, flie the Society of *Men*? Hide us in Forrests among wild Beasts, and sequester our selves from all Conversation, to preserve our selves from the evil of the World? Could we in so doing live at rest, it were something; But alas! Men cannot take here-in what part they would; and even they which do, find not there all the *Rest* they sought for.

BUT where can *He* fly, that carries his *Enemy* in his *Bosom*? And since, as the *Wise Man* says, The *World* is in our *Hearts*, hardly can we find a place in this *World*, where the *World* will not find *Us*. And as some make profession to flie the *World*, who thereby seek nothing but the  
praise

praise of the *World*; and as some  
*bide* themselves from *Men*, to no  
 other end but that *Men* should  
 seek them; so the *World* often  
 harbors in disguised *Attire*, among  
 them that *flie* the *World*. It is  
 not therefore *Solitude* and *Retire-*  
*ment* can give us *Contentment*, but  
 only the *subduing* of our unruly  
*Lusts* and *Passions*.

---

Contem-

## Contemplation IX.

### *The Troubles attending Knowledge.*

**N**OW as touching that Contentment that may be found in Solitude by wise Men, in the Exercise of Reading divers Books, of both Divine and Prophane Authors, in order to the acquiring of Knowledge and Learning, it is indeed a very commendable thing; but if we will take Solomon's Judgment in the Case, it is all but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.

**F**OR some are ever Learning to Correct their Speech, and never think of Correcting their Life.

**O**THERS by Logical Discourses of the ART of REASON, dispute many times so long, till they



they lose thereby their *NATURAL REASON*.

*ONE* learns by *Aritbmctick* to divide into the smallest *Fractions*, and yet hath not skill to part one *Shilling* with his *Brother*.

*ANOTHER* by *Geometry* can measure *Fields*, and *Towns*, and *Countries*: But cannot measure *Himself*.

*THE Musitian* can accord his *Voices* and *Sounds*, and *Times* together; having nothing in his *Heart* but *Discords*; nor one *Pas-sion* in his *Soul*, but what is out of *Tune*.

*THE Astrologer Looks* up to the *Stars*, and falls into the next *Ditch*: *Fore-knows* the *Future*, and is *careless* for the *Present*; hath often his *Eye* on the *Heavens*; tho' his *Heart* be Buried in the *Earth*.

THE

THE *Philosopher* Discourseth  
of the *Nature* of all other things;  
and yet knows not himself.

THE *Historian* can tell of  
the *Wars* of *Thebes*, and of *Troy*;  
but is *Ignorant* of what is done  
in his own *House*.

THE *Lawyer* will *Make Laws*  
for all the *World*, and yet observe  
none himself.

THE *Physitian* Cures others,  
but Languishes himself under his  
own *Malady*: He can find the  
least alteration in his *Pulse*, but  
takes no notice of the *burning*  
*Fever* of his *Mind*.

LASTLY, the *Divine* will  
spend the greatest part of his  
time in *Disputing* of *Faith*, and  
yet cares not to hear of *Charity*:  
Will *Talk* of *God*, but has no  
regard to *Succour Men*. These  
*Knowledges* bring on the *Mind*  
an *endless Labour*, but no *Con-*  
*tentment*

*tentment*; for the more he *knows*,  
the more he *desires to know*.

THEY pacifie not the *Debates*  
a Man feels in himself, they cure  
not the *Diseases* of his *Mind*.  
They make him *Learned*, but they  
make him not *Good*; *Cunning*,  
but not *Wise*. The more a Man  
*knows*, the more he *knows* that he  
*knows not*: The fuller the *Mind*  
is, the emptier it finds it self: For-  
asmuch as whatsoever a Man can  
*know* of any Science in this  
World, is but the least part of  
what he is *Ignorant of*: All his  
*Knowledge* consisting in knowing  
his *Ignorance*, all his *Perfection* in  
seeing his *Imperfections*, which who  
best *knows* and *notes*, is, in *Truth*  
among Men the most *Wise* and  
*Perfect*. In short, we must con-  
clude with *Solomon*, That the be-  
ginning and end of *Wisdom* is the  
*Fear of God*; yet this *Wisdom* ne-  
vertheless is taken by the *World*  
for meer *Folly*, and persecuted by  
the *World* as a deadly *Enemy*;  
C and

and therefore, as he that fears God, ought to fear no *Evil*, for that all *his Evils* are converted to *his Good*: So neither ought he to hope for *Good* in the *World*, having there the *Devil* his professed *Enemy*, whom the Scripture termeth *Prince of this World*.

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Contem-

## Comtemplation X.

### *Old Age.*

**B**UT with what Exercise soever we pass the time, *Old Age*, unawares, comes upon us, which never fails to find us out. Every Man makes account in *that Age* to repose himself without further care, and to keep himself at ease in Health. But on the contrary, in *this Age*, there is nothing but an *after-Taste* of all the foregoing Evils; and most commonly a plentiful Harvest of all such *Vices* as in the whole course of their Life, hath held and possessed them. There you have the *Imbecility* and *Weakness* of *Infancy*, and (which is worse) many times accompanied with *Authority*: There you are paid for the Excess and Riot of your *Youth*, with *Gouts*, *Palsies*, and such like *Diseases*, which

C 2

take

take from you Limb after Limb, with Pain and Torment. There you are recompenced for the *Anxieties of Mind*, the *watchings* and *cares of Manhood*, with loss of *Sight*, loss of *Hearing*, and all the *Senses* one after another, except only the *Sense of Pain*. Not one part in us but *Death* takes hold of, to be assured of us, as of *bad Pay-Masters*, which seldom keep *Days of Payment*: There is nothing in us which is not visibly declining, except our *Vices*; and they not only live, but in despite of *Nature*, - grow *Young* again.

THE *Covetous Man* hath one *Foot* in his *Grave*, and is yet burying his *Money*, as if he had hopes to find it again another *Day*.

THE *Ambitious* in his *Will* provides for a *Pompous Funeral*, making his *Vice* to triumph even after his *Death*.

THE



THE *Riotous* no longer able to Dance on his *Feet*, Danceth with his *Shoulders*, all *Vices* having left him, and he not able to leave them.

THE *Child* wishes for *Youth*; and *this Man* laments it.

THE *Young Man* lives in hope of the future, and this feels the *Evil present*, laments the *false Pleasures past*, and sees for the time to come *nothing* to hope for, and is more foolish than the *Child*, in *bewailing* the time he can't recall, and remembers not the *Evil* that he suffer'd in it; and more wretched than the *Young Man*, in that after a *Vicious Life*, and not being able any longer to live, he must *Miserably dye*, seeing nothing round about him but matter of *Despair*.

AS for him that from his *Youth* hath undertaken to combat against the *Flesh* and the *World*,  
C 3                      who

who hath used to mortifie himself, and leave the *World* whilst he continues in it; who besides those ordinary Evils, finds himself vexed with this great and incurable Disease of *Old Age*; and yet feels his *Flesh*, how weak soever, often *stronger* than his *Spirit*; what satisfaction can he take, but only in this, that he sees his *Death* is at hand; that his *Warfare* is accomplished, and that he is ready to depart by *Death* out of this loathsome *Prison*, wherein he has been all along rack'd and tormented?

I forbear to mention the almost infinite Evils wherewith Men, in all Ages, are afflicted, as loss of *Friends* and *Parents*, *Banishments*, *Exiles*, *Disgraces*, and other *Accidents*, common and ordinary in the *World*; one complaining of losing his *Children*, another of having them; one lamenting for his *Wives Death*, another for her *Life*; one finding fault that he is too high  
in

in Court, and others, more often, that they are not *high enough*. The *World* is so full of *Evils*, that it would require a *World of Time* to write 'em in. And if the most happy Man in the *World* should set his *Felicities* and *Infelicitities* against each other, he would see cause enough to judge himself *Unhappy*; and yet perhaps another Man might judge him *Happy*, who yet if he had been but three days in his Place, would give it over to him that should come next. And he that shall consider, in all the *Goods* that ever he hath had, the *Evils* he hath suffered to get them, and having got them, to retain and keep them, (I speak of Pleasures that may be kept, and not of those that wither in a Moment) he will soon judge that keeping it self of the greatest *Felicity* in this *World*, is full of *Unhappiness* and *Infelicity*.

WE may well conclude then,  
That

That *Childhood* is but a foolish  
*Simplicity* ; *Youth* a vain *Heat* ;  
*Manhood* a painful *Carefulness* ;  
and *Old Age* an uneasy *Languish-*  
*ing* : That our *Plays* are but *Tears*,  
our *Pleasures*, *Fevers* of the *Mind* ;  
our *Goods*, *Racks* and *Torments* ;  
our *Honours*, gilded *Vanities* ; our  
*Rest*, *Inquietude* : That passing  
from *Age* to *Age*, is but passing  
from *Evil* to *Evil*, and from the  
*less* unto the *greater* ; and that  
always it is but one *Wave* dri-  
ving another, until we be arrived  
at the *Haven* of *Death*.

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## Contemplation XI.

### *Life and Death.*

IN short, *Life* is but a wishing for the future, and a bewailing of what's past; a *Loathing* of what we have tasted, and a *Longing* for what is yet to taste; a vain *Memory* of the State past, and a doubtful *Expectation* of the State to come: And to conclude, in all our *Life* there is nothing *Certain*, but the *Certainty* and *Uncertainty* of *Death*.

LET us now consider then, whether *Death* be such as we are generally made to believe; and whether we ought to fly from Him as we do: We are afraid of *Death*, like little Children of a *Vizard*, or of the Images of *Hecate*: We have a horror for *Death*, because we conceive him not such

as he is, but ugly, terrible, and hideous; such as the *Painters* please to represent him: We fly before him because prepossess'd with such vain *Imaginations*, and care not to inform our selves better. But if we dare stand and look *Death* in the face, we shall find him quite another thing than he is represented to us, and altogether of a more amiable *Countenance* than our miserable *Life*. *Death* makes an end of this *Life*, and this *Life* is nothing but a perpetual Scene of *Misery* and *Trouble*; *Death* then is the *Period* of our *Miseries*, and safe *Conduct* into that desired *Haven*, where we shall ride in safety from all *Winds* and *Storms*: And shall we be afraid of that which delivers us from all our *Fears*, and brings us safe into the *Port* of *Happiness*.

BUT you will say it is a *Pain* to *Die*: Admit it be, and so there's *Pain* in *Curing* of a *Wound*: Such is the *World*, that  
one



one Evil can't be Cured but by another; to heal a *Contusion*, must be made an *Incision*.

YOU will say, There is difficulty in the Passage: But if this be an Objection, the *Mariner* must always keep at *Sea*, and not come into *Port*, because there is no *Harbour*, whose Entrance is not strait and difficult. There is nothing of Value or Worth to be had in this World without the Coin of *Labour* and *Pain*. The Entrance may indeed be hard, but then it is our selves that make it so, by carrying thither *self-Tormenting Spirits*, *anxious Minds*, *accusing Consciences*, and *fearful Expectations* of meeting with the just *Reward* of a *Debauch'd* and *Vicious Life*: But let us carry with us *Calmness* and *Serenity of Mind*, with the comfortable remembrance of a *Vertuous*, and *well-spent Life*, and the lively *Hope* and *Expectation* of approaching *Happiness*, and we shall find

find no Danger nor Difficulty at all.

BUT what are the *Pains* that *Death* brings us? And why should *Death* be charg'd with those *Pains* we feel when we come to *Die*? We accuse *Death* of all the *Evils* we suffer in ending our *Lives*, and consider not how many more grievous and cruciating *Pains* and *Sicknesses* we have suffered in this *Life*, in which we have even call'd upon *Death* to deliver us; and yet all the *Pains* of our *Life*, to our last moment, we impute to *Death*, whereas it ought to be ascrib'd to *Life*; for 'tis but reasonable to believe that a *Life* begun and continued in all sorts of *Pain*, must of necessity end so: And therefore 'tis only the remainder of our *Life* that pains us, and not *Death*; the end of our *Navigation* that troubles us, and not the *Haven* that we are to enter, which is nothing else but a Safe-guard against all  
*Winds.*

*Winds.* We complain of *Death*, when we should complain of *Life*, just as one that had been long *Sick*, and beginning to be *Well*, should accuse his *Health* of his last *Pains*, and not the *Relicks* of his *Disease*.

TELL me then, what is it else to be *Dead*, but to be no more *Living* in the *World*? And is it any *Pain* not to be in the *World*? Did we then feel *Pain* when as yet we were not? Have we ever more resemblance of *Death*, than when we are *Asleep*? Or ever more *Rest*, than at that time? Now, if this be no *Pain*, why accuse we *Death* of the *Pains* our *Life* gives us at our *Departure*? Unless also we will fondly accuse the time wherein we were not, of the *Pains* we felt at our *Birth*. If our coming *In* be with *Tears*, what wonder is it that our going *Out* be such? If the beginning of our *Being*, be the beginning of our *Pain*, no marvel that

that such is the *ending*. But if our *not Being* in times past, hath been *without Pain*, and our *Being* here *full of Pain*; whom ought we in reason to accuse of our *last pains*, the *not Being* to come, or the *remnant* of the *present Being*.

WE generally think we *dye not* until we fetch our last gasp, but if we mind it well, we shall find that we *dye* every day, every hour, every moment. We apprehend *Death* as a thing *unusual* to us, and yet have nothing so *common* in us: Our *living* is but a continual *dying*; and look how much we *live*, so much we *dye*; how much we *encrease*, our *Life decreases*: We cannot enter a *step* into *Life*, but we are upon the *borders* of *Death*. Who has lived a *third part* of his *Years*, is a *third part dead*; who *half* his *Years*, is already *half dead*. Of our *Life*, all the time *past* is *dead*, the *present lives* and *dies at once*, and the *future* likewise *shall dye*.

THE

THE *past* time of our Lives is no more, the future is not yet, the present is, and no more is.

BRIEFLY, This whole *Life* is but a *Death*: It is as a Candle lighted in our Bodies: In *one* the Wind makes it melt away, in *another* it blows it quite out, many times, e'er it be half burn'd; in *others* it endures to the end: Howsoever it be, look how much the Candle shines, so much it burns; for its shining is its burning: Its *Light* is but a vanishing *Smoke*; and its last *Fire* but its last *Wick*, and its last drop of moisture.

SO is it in the *Life* of Man; *Life* and *Death* in Man, is all one: If we call the last *Breath* by the Name of *Death*, so we must all the rest; all proceeding from one place, and all in the same manner.

ONE only difference there is between

between *this Life*, and that which we call *Death*; That—during the one, we are *always dying*; but after the other, we shall *always live*.

IN short, As he that thinketh *Death* simply to be the *End* of *Man*, ought not to fear it; inasmuch as he who *desires to live long*, desires to *dye longer*; and so he who *fears to dye quickly*, does (to speak properly) *fear* lest he may not *dye longer*.

BUT to us who profess the *Christian Religion*, and are brought up in a more *Holy School*, *Death* is a far other thing; neither do we need (as heretofore the *Pagans* did) *Consolations* against *Death*: For *Death* it self ought to be to us a *Consolation* against other *Afflictions*: So that we must not only strengthen our selves (as they did) not to *fear* it; but we ought also to *hope* it: For unto us it is not only a *departing* from *Pain* and *Evil*, but an *Access* unto all  
*Good*;



Good; not the *end* of *Life*, but the *end* of *Death*, and *Pain* and *Sorrow*; and the *beginning* of a *Life* that shall never end.

**BETTER** (saith Solomon) is the *Day* of *Death*, than the *Day* of *Birth*: But for what Reason? Why, because it is to us a *last* *Day*, but the *Dawning* of an ever-*lasting* *Day*.

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Con-

## Contemplation XII.

### *Future State.*

**N**O more shall we have in that Glorious *Light* either *Sorrow* for the *past*, or *Expectation* for the *future*; for all shall be there *present* to us, and that *present* shall be *present* for ever. No more shall we spend our *Strength* in seeking after *vain* and *painful Pleasures*; for there we shall be fill'd with *true* and *substantial Delights*. No more shall we weary our selves in heaping together these shining *Exhalations* of the *Earth*; for the *inexpressible Glory* of *Heaven* shall be ours: And this *Mass* of *Earth*, which ever draws us towards the *Earth*, shall be then buried in it, and consumed with it.

NO more shall we then be *Voluntaries* to that gaudy *Idol*, *Honour*; nor.

nor put our Wits upon the Rack, that so we may be deck'd with finer Feathers than our Neighbours; *Ambition* will have there no place; for we shall there be rais'd to that *excelling Glory*, and be possess'd of all those *Heights of Greatness*, that we shall look with Scorn and with Contempt upon an *Earthly Diadem*; and smile at all the Follies of poor *groveling Mortals*, who Fight and Quarrel with each other for a small spot of *Earth*, like *Children* for an *Apple*.

AND (which is better still) no more shall we have *Combats* in our *selves*; our Sinful Flesh (that here was our worst Enemy) shall cease from troubling *there*; and our renewed *Spirits* shall be fill'd with *Life* and *Vigour*: Our *Passion* shall be *buried*, and our *Reason* be *restored* to perfect *Liberty*: The Soul (deliver'd out of this foul and filthy Prison, where by its long continuing it is grown  
into

into a habit of Crookedness) shall again draw its own Breath, recognize its Ancient Dwelling, and again remember its former *Glory* and *Dignity*.

*THIS Flesh* which thou feelest, this *Body* which thou touchest, is not *Man*: *Man* is a *Spark* of the *Divinity* shot down from *Heaven*: *Heaven* is his *Country*, and his *Native Air*. That he is in this *Body*, is but by way of *Exile* and *Confinement*.

*MAN* indeed is *Soul* and *Spirit*, and is of a *Divine* and *Heavenly Quality*, wherein there's nothing *gross*, nothing *material*. This *Body* (such as now it is) is but the *Bark* and *Shell* of the *Soul*; which must necessarily be broke, before we can be *Hatch'd*, before we can *Live* and see the *Light*.

*WE* have, it seems, some *Life*, and some *Sence* in us; but are so

so very *Crooked* and *Contracted*,  
 that we cannot so much as stretch  
 out our *Wings*, much less take  
 our Flight towards *Heaven*, until  
 we be disburthen'd and separated  
 from this Lump of *Earth*: We  
 look, but 'tis through *false Specta-*  
*cles*: We have *Eyes*, but they are  
 over-grown with *Pearls*: We think  
 we *See*, but 'tis but a *Dream*,  
 wherein all that we *see* is nothing  
 but a *vain Illusion*: All that we  
*seem* to *Have*, and and all that  
 we *seem* to *Know*, is but *Deceit*  
 and *Vanity*.

*DEATH* only can awake us  
 from our *Dream*, and restore us to  
 true *Life* and *Light*; and yet we  
 think (so *Blockish* are we) that  
 he comes to Rob us of them.

WE profess our selves *Christians*,  
 and that we believe after this  
*Mortal Life* a *Life of Immortality*;  
 That *Death* is nothing but a se-  
 paration of the *Soul* and *Body*;  
 and that the *Soul* returns to its  
 former

former happy Abode, there to Joy in and enjoy the Fountain of all *Bliss*; and that at the last Day it shall re-assume its *Body*, which shall no more be subject to *Corruption*. With these goodly Discourses we fill our Books; and in the mean while, when it comes to the point, and that we are ready to enter in at this *Portcullis* of *Seraphical Glory*, the very *Name* of *Death*, as of some dreadful *Gorgon*, makes us quake and tremble.

IF we believe as we speak, pray what is it that we *Fear*? To be *happy*? To be perfectly at *Ease*? To enjoy more *Content* in one moment, than ever was enjoy'd even by *Methuselah* himself, in all his Nine Hundred Sixty Nine Years, which was the longest *Mortal Life* I ever read of? If this be nothing that we *Fear*, then we must of necessity confess, that we believe it but in part; that



that all that we have said, are  
only Words; that all our Dis-  
courses, as of those hardy *Trencher*  
*Knights*, are nothing but *Vaunting*  
and *Vanity*.

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Contem-

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## Contemplation XIII.

*The Folly of those who daily hazard  
more than Death for Trifles.*

**S**OME there are that will confidently tell you, I know very well that I shall pass out of this Life into a better; I make no doubt of that; only I fear the mid-way Step.

*WEAK Hearted Creatures!*  
They will kill themselves to get their Miserable Living: They willingly suffer almost Infinite Pains, and Infinite Wounds at another Mans Pleasure; and fearless go thro' Infinite Deaths without Dying, and all this for things of nought, for things that perish, and that oft times causes them to perish with them. But when they have but one Step to make

make to be at *Rest*, and that not for a *Day*, but for *Ever*: And not barely *Rest*, but a *Rest* of that exalted Nature, that *Mans* Natural *Mind* can never comprehend: They *Tremble*, their *Hearts* fail them, they are *afraid*; and yet it is nothing but *Fear* that hurts them. Let them never tell me, they apprehend the *Pain*: It is but an abuse on purpose to conceal the little *Faith* they have. No, no, they would rather *Languish* of the *Gout*, the *Sciatica*, or any Disease whatsoever, than *Die* one sweet *Death* with the least *Pain* possible: Rather *Piningly Die* Limb after Limb, out-living as it were, all their *Sences*, *Motions*, and *Actions*, than *speedily Die*, tho' immediately to *Live for ever*. Let them tell me no more that they would in this World *learn* to *Live*: For every one is thereunto sufficiently instructed in himself, and not one but is cunning in the Trade. Nay, rather they should *learn* in this World

to *Die*, and that they may once *Die Well*, to *Die Daily* in themselves; so prepared, as if the end of every days Work, were the end of our Life.

NOW contrariwise there is nothing to their Ears more Offensive, than to hear of *Death*. Senseless People! We abandon our *Life* to the ordinary hazards of *War*, for Six Pence a Day, and are foremost in *Affaults*, for a little *Booty*; go into Places, whence there is no hope of returning, with danger many times both of *Bodies* and *Souls*. But to free us from all Hazards, to win the precious Price of things Inestimable, to enter into *Eternal Life*, we Faint in the passage of one Pace, wherein is no difficulty, but in Opinion: Yea, we so Faint, that were it not of necessity that we must pass, and that Gods Ordination that all must *Die*, compells us, hardly should we find in  
all

all the World one, how unhappy or wretched soever, that would ever shoot that Gulph. *Another* will say, had I liv'd till Fifty or Sixty Years, I should have been Contented; I should not have cared to *Live* longer: But to *die so Young*, is that which troubles me: I would willingly have known the *World* before I had left it. Simple Soul! In this *World* there is neither *Young* nor *Old*. The longest Age in comparison of all that is *past*, or all that is to *come*, is nothing: And when thou hast liv'd to the Age thou now desirest, all that is *past* will be nothing: Thou wilt still gape for that which is to *come*. The *past* will yield thee but *Sorrow*, the *future* but *Expectation*, the *present* no *Contentment*. And thou wilt be as unwilling to *die* then, as ever thou wast. Thou fleest thy *Creditor* from Month to Month, and Time to Time, as unwilling to *Pay* the last Day, as the first: Thou seekest but to

be acquitted. Thou hast tasted all which the *World* esteemeth *Pleasures*: Not one of them is new unto thee. By Drinking oftener, thou shalt be never a whit the more satisfied: For the *Body* thou carriest like the *Pail* of *Danaus's* Daughter, which was bored full of holes, will never be full. Thou may'st sooner wear it out, than weary thy self with using, or rather abusing it. Thou desirest *long Life*, to cast it away, to spend it on worthless *Delights*, to mis-spend it on *Vanities*. Thou art *Covetous* in *desiring*, and *Profligate* in *spending*. Say not thou findest fault with the *Court*, or the *Palace*: But that thou desirest longer to serve the *Common-wealth*, to serve thy *Country*, to serve *God*. He that set thee on *Work* knows until what *day*, and what *hour*, thou shouldest be at it: He well knows how to direct his *Work*. Should he leave thee there longer, perhaps thou wouldest spoil all. But if he will Pay thee liberally for



for thy *Labour*, as much for half  
 a Days Work, as for a whole:  
 As much for having wrought till  
*Noon*, as for having born the  
 Heat all the Day: Oughtest thou  
 not so much the more to *Thank*  
 and *Praise* him? But if thou ex-  
 amine thine own *Conscience*, thou  
 Lamentest not the *Cause* of the  
*Widow*, and the *Orphan*, which  
 thou hast left depending in judg-  
 ment: Not the *Duty* of a *Son*, of  
 a *Father*, or of a *Friend*, which  
 thou pretendest thou wouldest per-  
 form: Not the *Ambassage* for the  
*Commonwealth*, which thou wert  
 ever ready to undertake: Not  
 the *Service* thou desirest to do  
 unto *God*, who knows much bet-  
 ter how to serve himself of thee,  
 than thou of thy self. It is thy  
*Houses* and *Gardens* thou lamentest,  
 thy imperfect *Plots* and *Purposes*,  
 and thy *Imperfect Life*; which  
 yet no *Days*, nor *Years*, nor  
*Ages* can make *Perfect*, altho'  
 thy self might'st do it in a  
 D ; moment;

moment; couldst thou but think  
 in earnest, that *where*, or *when*  
 it ends, it matters not, provided  
 that it ends but *Well*.

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Contem-

## Contemplation XIV.

*How to End this Life Well.*

NOW the only way to end this *Life well*, is to end it willingly: Devoting our selves with an intire Resignation to the *Will* of GOD, and not suffering our selves to be constrain'd, and drawn by the force of unavoidable Destiny.

AND then to end this *Life* willingly, we must hope for *Death*, not *Fear* it.

TO hope for *Death*, we must certainly look, after this *Life*, for a better.

TO look for a better *Life*, we must fear GOD: And he that truly fears GOD, has nothing else he ought to fear in this  
D 4 *World*,

*World*, and has reason to *hope* for all things in the *World* to come.

TO one well resolved in these Points, *Death* must needs be sweet and agreeable: Knowing that thro' it he is to enter into the fulness of Joy.

THE *Bitterness* we may find by the straitness of the Passage, will be allay'd by the *Sweetness* we shall find when we are enter'd in: Our suffering of Ill, shall be swallow'd up in the enjoyment of Good: And the *Sting of Death* it self (which is nothing but Fear) shall be dead.

NAY, I will say more, He shall not only triumph over all those Evils supposed to be in *Death*, but he shall also scorn all those Evils Men fear to meet with in *this Life*, and look upon 'em as unconcern'd.

FOR what can he fear, whose *Death*

*Death* is his *hope*? If you think to Banish him his Country, he knows he has a County from whence you cannot Banish him; and that all these Countries are but Inns, from which he must part in a little time. If to put him in a *Prison*, he can have none more strait than his own Body: Nor none more filthy or dark, or more repleat of *Racks* and *Torments*: Or if you think to *Kill* him, you only then compleat his *Hopes*, for *death's* what he *desires*. And for the manner of it, be it by *Fire*, by *Sword*, by *Halter*, or by *Ax*; within three Years, within three Days, within three Hours, it is all one to him; he matters not the *Time*, nor minds the *Way*, by which he passes from this *Miserable Life*: For his *Work* is ended, his *Affairs* dispatch'd; and by the self-same way that he goes Out, he hopes to enter into a most happy and everlasting *Life*. Men can but threaten with *Death*, and

*Death* is all he promiseth himself: The worst that they do, is but to make him *Die*, and *Death* is the best thing (in his account) that he can hope for.

THE Threatnings of a Tyrant, to him are Promises; the Swords of his greatest Enemies against him, he reckons drawn in his Favour; forasmuch as he knows, That threatening him *Death*, they threaten him *Life*; and the most Mortal Wounds can make him but *Immortal*.

THE sum of all is, He that fears *God*, fears not *Death*; and he that fears not *Death*, fears not the worst of this *Life*.

BY this reckoning (perhaps some Men may say) *Death* is a thing to be wished for: And to pass from so much *Evil* to so much *Good*, a Man would be ready to cast away his *Life*, and make away himself.

IN

IN answer to this, we may take Notice, First, That tho' the *Spirit* aspires towards *Heaven*, the *Body* draws towards the *Earth*, and the *Soul* is too often drawn by the *Body*. But in the Sccond place; We must indeed seek to moetifre our *Flesh* in us, and to cast the *World* out of us; but to cast our selves out of this *World*, is in no case Lawful.

THE *Christian* ought willingly to depart out of this *Life*, but not Cowardly to run away. His Work is to Fight against the *World*, and cannot leave his Post, without *Reproach* and *Infamy*. But if his Great Captain be pleas'd to call him, let him willingly Obey: For he is not Born for himself, but for *God*, of whom he holds his *Life* at Farm, as *Tenant* at *Will*, to yield him the profits. It is in the *Landlord* to take it from him, not in him to surrender it, when a *Conceit* takes him.

D I E S T



**DIEST** thou *Young*? Praise God; as the *Mariner* that hath a good *Wind*, soon to bring him to the *Port*.

**DIEST** thou *Old*? Praise God likewise: For if thou hast had *less Wind*, it may be thou hast also had *less Waves*.

**BUT** think not at thy pleasure to go faster or slower, for the *Wind* is not in thy *Power*; and instead of taking the *shortest* way to the *Haven*, thou may'st suffer *Shipwrack*.

**LET** us then neither fly from *Death*, when we are call'd to *Die*, whether it be in a more *Natural* way, as by the *Sword* in *Battle*, or by the *Hand* of an *Executioner*: Nor fly to it, not being call'd: Which both argues the greatest *Baseness* and *Pusillanimity* of *Spirit*, and will also bring the guilt of our own *Blood* upon

on our own Heads: But let us meet  
*Death*, whenever or however it  
comes, with that *Magnanimity* and  
*Greatness of Mind*, that becomes  
both a *Man* and a *Christian*.

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THE

# Philosophers Disquisition

Directed to the

## DYING CHRISTIAN.

I.

**B**Efore your *Death* you never *Knowledge* gain,  
(For to increase your *Knowledge* you must die)

Tell me if all that *Learning* be not vain,

To which we proudly in this *Life* rely.

2.

Is not the *Learning* which we *Knowledge* call,

Our own but by *Opinion* and in part?

Not made intirely certain, nor to all;

And is not *Knowledge* but disputed *Art*?

3. And

3.

And tho' a bad, yet 'tis a forward Guide ;  
 Who, vexing at the shortness of the day,  
 Doth to o'ertake swift time, still onward ride ;  
 Whilst we still follow, and still doubt our way.

4.

A Guide, who ev'ry step proceeds with doubt ;  
 Who guessingly her Progress doth begin ;  
 And brings us back where first she led us out  
 To meet dark Midnight at our restless Inn.

5.

It is a Plummert to so short a Line,  
 As sounds no deeper than the sounders Eyes,  
 The Peoples Meteor which not long can shine,  
 Nor far above the middle Region rise.

6.

This Spy from Schools gets ill Intelligence ;  
 Where Art imposing Rules, oft gravly errs,  
 She steals to Nature's Closet, and from thence,  
 Brings nought but undecypher'd Characters,

7. She.

7.

She doth, like *India's* last Discov'ers, boast  
Of adding to old Maps, tho, she has bin.

But Sailing by some clear and open Coast,  
Where all is woody, wild, and dark within

8.

*False Learning* wanders upward more and more,

*Knowledge* (for such there is in some degree)  
Still vainly, like the Eagle, loves to soare,  
Tho' it can never to the highest see.

9.

For Errors mist doth bound the Spirits sight,  
As Clouds (which make Earths arched Roof seem  
[low.

Restrain the Bodies Eyes; and still when light  
Grows clearer upward, Heaven must higher show).

10.

And as good Men, whose Minds towards Godhead  
[rise

Take Heavens height higher than they can express  
So from that height they lower things despise,  
And oft contract Earths littleness to less.

11. Of

## 11.

Of this forbidden Fruit, since we but gain,  
 A taste, by which we only hungry grow;  
 We meerly toil to find our Studies vain;  
 And trust to Schools for what they cannot know.

## 12.

If *Knowledge* be the Coin of Souls, 'tis set,  
 Above the Standard of each common Reign,  
 And, like a Medal of Gods Cabinet,  
 Is seldom shewn, and soon put up again.

## 13.

For tho' in one blest Age much Sway it bears,  
 Yet to the next it oft becomes unknown;  
 Unless like long hid Medals it appears.  
 In Counterfeits, and for deceit be shown:

## 14.

If Heav'n with *Knowledge* did some one induce  
 With more than the Experience of the Dead;  
 To teach the Living more than Life e'er knew  
 In Schools, where all Succession may be bred.

15. Then



15.

Then (as in Courts, meer Strangers bashfully  
 At first their walk towards private Doors begin;  
 But bolder grow when those they open spy,  
 And being enter'd, becken others in.)

16.

So to his Studious Cell (which would appear  
 Like Natures privy-Lodgings) my address  
 I first by stealth would make but entring there  
 I should grow bold, and give to all access.

17.

Then to her secret Nursery would proceed;  
 And thither bring the World, to judge how the  
 First-Causes, and Times Infancy did breed:  
 For *Knowledge*, should, since good, to all be free:

18.

If *Knowledge* must, as evil, hidden lie,  
 Then we, its Object, *Nature*, seem to blame;  
 And whilst we banish *Knowledge*, as a Spy,  
 We but hide *Nature* as we cover *Shame*.

19. For

19.

For if our Object, *Nature*, be correct,  
 Bold *Knowledge* then a free Spectator is,  
 And not a Spy, since Spyes we scarce suspect  
 Or fear, but where their Objects are amiss.

20.

In gathering *Knowledge* from the Sacred Tree,  
 I would not snatch in haste the Fruit below;  
 But rather climb, like those who curious be,  
 And boldly taste, that which does highest grow.

21.

For *Knowledge* would her prospect take in height;  
 'Tis Gods lov'd *Eaglet*, bred by him to fly,  
 Tho' with weak Eyes, still upward at the light,  
 And may soare short, but cannot soare too high.

22.

Tho' life, since finite, has no ill excuse  
 For being but in finite Objects Lapp'd,  
 Yet sure the Soul was made for limle use,  
 Unless it be in infinites concern'd.

23. Speak

23.

Speak then such things of Heaven (since *studious minds*  
 Seem travail'd Souls, and yours prepares to go)  
 As mine may wish the Journey when it finds  
 That yours doth Heaven, her native country, know

24.

Tell, if you found your *Faith*, e'er you it fought?  
 Or could it spring e'er *Reason* was full blown?  
 Or could it learn, till by your *Reason* taught,  
 To know it self, or be by others known?

25.

Where Men have several *Faiths*, to find the true  
 We only can the aid of *Reason* use;  
 'Tis *Reason* shews us which we should eschew  
 When by comparison we learn to chuse.

26.

But tho' we there on *Reason* must relye,  
 Where Men to several *Faiths* their Minds dispose,  
 Yet, after *Reasons* choice, the Schools are shy  
 To let it judge the very *Faith* it chose.

27. How

27.

How e'er, 'tis call'd to confer the Records  
 Of *Faiths* dark Charter, wrapt in Sacred Writ;  
 And is the only Judge even of those words  
 By which *Faith* claims that *Reason* should submit.

28.

Since Holy Text bids *Faith* to comprehend  
 Such Mysteries as Nature may suspect,  
 And *Faith* must *Reason*, as her Guide, attend,  
 Left she mistake what Scripture doth direct.

29.

Since from the Souls far Country, Heaven, God sent,  
 His Law (an Embassy to few reveal'd)  
 Which did those good Conditions represent  
 Of our Eternal Peace, e'er it was seal'd.

30.

Since to remote Ambassadors are given,  
 Interpreters, when they with Kings confer;  
 Since to that Law, Gods Embassy from Heaven,  
 Our *Reason* serves as an Interpreter;

31. Since

## 31.

Since justly Clients pay that *Judge* in awe,  
 Who Laws lost Sense interprets and restores;  
 Yet *Judges* are no more above the Law  
 (Then *Truchemen* are above *Ambassadors*.)

## 32.

Since *Reason*, as a *Judge*, the Tryal hath  
 Of diff'ring *Faiths*, by adverse Pens perplex;  
 Why is not *Reason* reckon'd above *Faith*,  
 Tho' not above her Law, the Sacred Text;

## 33.

If *Reason* have such worth, why should she still  
 Attend below, whilst *Faith* doth upward climb?  
 Yet common *Faith* seems but *Unstudy'd Will*;  
 And *Reason* calls *Unstudy'd Will* a Crime:

## 34.

Slave *Reason*, even at home in Prison lies!  
 And by *Religion* is so watch'd and aw'd,  
 That tho' the Prison Windows, both her Eyes,  
 Stand open, yet she scarce dare looks abroad.

35.

*Faith* thinks, that *Reason* is her adverse Spy;  
 Yet *Reason* is, thro' doubtful ways, her Guide;  
 But like a Scout, brought in from th' Enemy,  
 Must, when she guides her, bound, & guarded ride:

36.

Or if by *Faith*, not as her *Judge* disdain'd,  
 Nor, as her Guide, suspected, but is found  
 In every Sentence just to the Arraign'd,  
 And guides her right, unguarded and unbound.

37.

Why then should such a *Judge* be still'd deny'd  
 T' examine (since *Faith's* claims still Publick are)  
 Her secret Pleas? Or, why should such a Guide  
 Be hinder'd, where *Faith* goes, to go as far.

38.

And yet as one, bred humbly, who would show  
 His Monarchs Palace to a Stranger goes  
 But to the Gates; as if to let him know  
 Where so much Greatness dwells, not what it does.

39. Whilst

39.

Whilst strait the Stranger enters undeny'd,  
 As one whose breeding has much bolder bin;  
 So *Reason*, tho' she were at first *Faith's* Guide  
 To Heav'n, yet waits without, when *Faith* goes in.

40.

But tho', at Court, bold Strangers enter, where  
 The way is to their bashful Guide forbid;  
 Yet he, when they come back, is apt to hear  
 And ask them, what the King then said and did.

41.

And so, tho' *Reason* (which is *Faith's* first Guide  
 To God) is stop't where *Faith* has entrance free,  
 As Nature's Stranger; tho' 'tis then deny'd  
 To *Reason*, as of Natures Family;

42.

Yet strait, when from her Vision and her Trance  
*Faith* does return, then *Reason* quits that awe,  
 Enjoy'd when *Priests* impos'd our Ignorance;  
 And asks, how much she of the Godhead saw?

E

43. But



43.

But as a Prudent *Monarch* seems alone,  
 Retir'd, as if conceal'd even to his Court ;  
 To Subjects more in Pow'r than Person known ;  
 At distance fought, and found but by Report.

44.

So God hath vail'd his Pow'r with Mysteries,  
 Even to his court in Heaven; and *Faith* comes there,  
 Not prying with a Strangers' curious Eyes,  
 But like a plain implicit Worshipper.

45.

Yet as Court-strangers, getting some access,  
 Are apt to tell at home, more than they saw ;  
 Tho' then their Pencil draws Court-greatness less,  
 Than that which *Truth* at nearer view could draw.

46.

So *Faith* (who is even taught an Ignorance ;  
 For she by *Knowledge* quits her Dignity)  
 Does lessen God-head, which she would advance,  
 By telling more of God than she can see.

47. Our

47.

Our Souls but like unhappy Strangers come  
From Heav'n, their Country, to this World's bad  
[Coast;  
They Land, then strait are backward bound for home;  
And many are in Storms of Passion lost!

48.

They long with danger fail thro' Lives next Seas,  
In Bodies, as in Vessels full of leaks;  
Walking in Veins, their narrow Galleries,  
Shorter than walks of Seamen on their Decks.

49.

Art's Card, is by their Pilot, *Faith*, refus'd;  
Her Course by guess she ever forward bears;  
*Reason* her Rudder is, but never us'd;  
Because towards Heaven she ne'r with *Reason* steers.

50.

For as a Pilot, sure of fair Trade-Winds,  
The Helm in all the Voyage never hands,  
But ties it up, so *Reasons* Helm she binds,  
And boldly clofs for Heavens safe Harbour stands.

51.

In *Reasons* place, *Tradition* doth her lead;  
 And that presumptuous Antiquary makes  
 Strong Laws of weak Opinions of the Dead,  
 And what was common Coin for Medals, takes.

52.

*Tradition*! Times suspected Register!  
 Too oft *Religion* at her Trial fails!  
 Instead of *Knowledge*, teacheth her to err;  
 And wears out *Truth's* best Stories into Tales.

53.

O why hath such a Guide *Faith's* progress laid?  
 Or can our *Faith*, ill guided, guide us well?  
 Or had she not *Traditions* Maps survey'd,  
 How could she aim to shew us Heav'n and Hell:

54.

If *Faith* with *Reason* never doth advise;  
 Nor yet *Tradition* leads her, she is then  
 From Heav'n inspir'd, and secretly grows wise  
 Above the Schools we know not how, nor when.

55. For

55.

For could we know how *Faith's* held trust is wrought,  
 What are those Visions we in sleep discern;  
 And when by Heavens short whispers we are taught  
 More than the watchful Schools could ever learn.

56.

Then soon *Faith's* Ignorance, which now doth seem,  
 A serious wonder to *Philosophy*,  
 Would fall from Value to a low Esteem,  
 And not a Wonder nor a Virtue be.

57.

But tho' we cannot guess the manner how  
 Grace first is secretly in small Seeds sown;  
 Yet Fruit, tho' Seeds lie hid, in view doth grow;  
 And *Faith*, the fruit of *Grace*, must needs be known.

58.

*Faith* lights us thro' the dark to Deitie;  
 Whilst, without sight, we witness that she shows  
 More God then in his works our Eyes can see;  
 Tho' none but by those works the Godhead knows.

59.

If you have *Faith*, then you we must adore ;  
 Since *Faith* does rather seem inspir'd than taught ;  
 And Men inspir'd have of the Godhead more  
 Than *Nature* ever found, or *Reason* fought.

60.

To you whom Inspiration sanctifies,  
 I come with Doubts, the Minds defect of sight,  
 As to *Apostles* some, with darkned Eyes,  
 Came to receive by Miracle their sight.

61.

And when I thus presume, you are with more  
 Than *Natures* publick Wealth by *Faith* endur'd,  
 Or think you should reveal your secret Store ;  
 You cannot judge my bold Opinion rude.

62.

Even *Faith* (not proving what it would assure)  
 But bold Opinion seems to *Reasons* view ;  
 And since the Blind brought *Faith* to help their cure,  
 I bring Opinion, *Reasons* *Faith*, to you.

63. We,

63.

We, for their *Knowledge*, Men Inspir'd adore;  
 Not for those *Truths* they hide, but those they show;  
 And *Vulgar Reason* finds, that none knows more  
 Than that which he can make another know.

64.

Then tell me first, if *Nature* must forbear  
 To ask, why still she must remain in doubt?  
 A *Darkness* which does much like *Hell* appear,  
 Where all may enter in but none get out.

65.

Thus we at once are bidden, and forbid;  
 Charg'd to make God the Object of the Mind;  
 Then hinder'd from it, since he is so hid,  
 As we but seek that which we cannot find.

66.

Our glimm'ring *Knowledge*, like the wandering Light  
 In *Fenns*, doth to incertainties direct  
 The weary Progress of our useless fight;  
 And only makes us able to suspect.

E 4

67. Or

67.

Or if inquiring Minds are not kept in,  
 But by some few, whom Schools to Power advance,  
 Who, since themselves see short, would make it Sin,  
 When others look beyond their Ignorance.

68.

If, as Gods Students, we have leave to learn  
 His *Truths*, why doth his Text oft need debate?  
 Why, as thro' Mists, must we his Laws discern?  
 Since Laws seem Snares, when they are intricate.

69.

They who believe Mans *Reason* is too scant,  
 And that it doth the War of Writers cause;  
 Infer that Gods great Works proportion want,  
 Who taught our *Reason*, and did write those *Laws*.

70.

His Text, the Souls Record, appears to some  
 (Tho' thence our Souls hold their Inheritance)  
 Obscure by growing Old, and seems to come,  
 Not by consignment to us, but by chance.



71.

*Law* (which is *Reason* made *Authority*)

Allows consignment to be good and clear,  
Not when, like this, it does in Copies lie,  
But in the known Original appear.

72.

Could this Record be too Authentick made?  
Or why, when God has fashion'd to our Eyes,  
And very Forms of Humane Laws obey'd,  
Did he not sign it but by Deputies?

73.

Or why, when he was Man, did he not dain  
Wholly to write this Text with his own hand?  
Or why (as if all written Rolls were vain)  
Did he ne'er write but once, and but in Sand?

74.

Tell me, why Heav'n at first did suffer Sin?  
Letting Seed grow which it had never sown?  
Why, when the Souls first Fever did begin,  
Was it not cur'd, which now a Plague is grown?

E s

75. Why/

75.

Why did not Heav'n's prevention Sin restrain?

Or is not Pow'r's permission a consent?

Which is in Kings as much as to ordain;

And ill's ordain'd are free from Punishment.

76.

And since no Crime could be e'er *Laws* were fram'd;

*Laws* dearly taught us how to know offence;

Had *Laws* not been, we never had been blam'd;

For not to know we Sin, is Innocent.

77.

*Sin's* Childhood was not starv'd, but rather more:

Than finely fed; so sweet were Pleasures made.

That nourish'd it: For sweet is Lust of Pow'r,

And sweeter Beauty, which hath Power betray'd.

78.

Sin, which at fullest growth is Childish still,

Would but for Pleasures company decay;

As Sickly Children thrive that have their will;

But quickly languish being kept from Play.

79. Since

79.

Since only Pleasure breeds Sins Appetite;  
 Which still by pleasant objects is infus'd;  
 Since 'tis provok'd to what it doth commit;  
 And ills provok'd may plead to be excus'd.

80.

Why should our Sins, which not a moment last,  
 (For, to Eternity compar'd, extent  
 Of Life, is, e'er we name it, stop'd and past)  
 Receive a doom of endless Punishment?

81.

If Souls to Hell's vast Prison never come  
 Committed for their Crimes, but destin'd be,  
 Like Bondmen born, whose Prison is their Home,  
 And long e'er they were bound could not be free.

82.

Then hard is Destinies dark Law; whose Text  
 We are forbid to read, yet must obey;  
 And Reason with her useless Eyes are vext,  
 Which strive to guide her where they see no way.

83. Doth

83.

With it our *Reasons* mutinies appease,  
 To say, the Potter may his own Clay mould  
 To every use, or in what shape he please,  
 At first not councell'd, nor at last controul'd.

84.

Pow'r's hand can neither easie be nor strict  
 To liveless Clay, which ease nor torment knows,  
 And where it cannot favour nor afflict,  
 It neither *Justice* nor *Injustice* flows.

85.

But Souls have Life, and Life Eternal too;  
 Therefore if doom'd before they can offend,  
 It seems to shew what Heavenly Power can do,  
 But does not in that deed that Power commend.

86.

That we are destin'd after Death no more  
 Than *Reason* thinks due Punishment for Sins,  
 Seems possible, because in Life, before  
 We know to Sin, our Punishment begins.

87. Why

87.

Why else do Infants with Incessant cries  
Complain of secret harm as soon as born ?  
Or why are they, in Cities destinies,  
So oft by War from ravish'd Mothers torn ?

88.

Doth not belief of being destin'd draw  
Our *Reason to Presumption or Despair* ?  
If Destiny be not, like Humane Law,  
To be repal'd, what is the use of Prayer ?

89.

Why even to all was Prayer enjoyn'd ? Since those  
Whom God (whose Will ne'er alters) did elect  
Are sure of Heaven, when we Pray it shows  
That we his certainty of will suspect.

90.

Those who to lasting darkness destin'd were,  
Tho' soon as born they Pray, yet pray too late :  
Avoidless ills we to no purpose fear ;  
And none, when fear is past, will supplicate.

T H E

The first thing which I observed  
on entering the room was a  
man sitting at a table, and  
writing. He was dressed in  
a dark coat, and had a  
white cravat. He looked  
at me for a moment, and  
then continued writing. I  
approached him, and he  
looked up at me again.  
He then said, "What do  
you wish?" I told him  
that I was a student of  
the law, and that I was  
interested in the subject  
of the case which he was  
writing. He then said, "I  
am sorry that I cannot  
help you more, but I am  
very busy at present."  
I then said, "I am sorry  
to hear that, but I am  
very interested in the  
subject, and I am sure  
that you will be able to  
help me in some way or  
another." He then said, "I  
will try to help you as  
best I can, but I am  
very busy at present."  
I then said, "I am sorry  
to hear that, but I am  
very interested in the  
subject, and I am sure  
that you will be able to  
help me in some way or  
another." He then said, "I  
will try to help you as  
best I can, but I am  
very busy at present."

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THE  
 Christians Reply  
 TO THE  
 PHILOSOPHER.

1.  
**T**HE Good in Graves as Heavenly Seed are sown;  
 And at the Seasons first spring, the general Dooms  
 Will rise, not by degrees, but fully blown;  
 When all the Angels to their Harvest come.

2.  
 Cannot Almighty Heaven (since Flowers which pass  
 Thaw'd thro' a Still, and there melt mingled too,  
 Are rais'd distinct in a poor Chymists Glass)  
 Do more in Graves than Men in Lymbecks do?

3. God



3.

God bred the Arts to make us more believe

(By seeking Natures cover'd Mysterics)

His darker Works, that Faith may thence conceive

He can do more than what our Reason sees.

4.

O Coward Faith! Religion's trembling Guide!

Whom even the dim-ey'd Arts must lead to see

What Nature only from our Sloth does hide,

Causes remote, which Faith's dark dangers be.

5.

Religion, e'er impos'd, should first be taught;

Not seem to dull obedience ready laid,

Then swallow'd stait for ease, but long be sought;

And be by Reason counsel'd, tho' not sway'd.

6.

God has enough in Human kind disclos'd;

Our Fleishly Garments he a while receiv'd,

And walk'd as if the Godhead were depos'd,

Yet could be then but by a few believ'd.

7. The

7.

The faithless *Jews* will this at Doom confess,  
 Who did suspect him for his low disguise:  
 But, if he could have made his *Virtue* less,  
 He had been more familiar to their Eyes.

8.

Frail Life! In which, thro' Mists of Humane Breath,  
 We grope for *Truth*, and make our Progress slow;  
 Because, by Passion blinded, till by Death,  
 Our Passions ending, we begin to know.

9.

O Reverend Death! Whose looks can soon advise  
 Even scornful Youth; whilst Priests their Doctrine  
 [waste,  
 Yet mock us too; for he does make us Wise,  
 When by his coming our Affairs are past.

10.

O harmless Death! Whom still the Valiant brave,  
 The Wise expect, the Sorrowful invite,  
 And all the Good embrace, who know the Grave,  
 A short dark passage to Eternal Light.

F I N I S.

28 MR 59

